



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Health Care Quality and Cost Council  
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Boston, MA 02116**

**DEVAL L. PATRICK**  
Governor

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**JUDYANN BIGBY, M.D.**  
Chair

**TIMOTHY P. MURRAY**  
Lieutenant Governor

**KATHARINE LONDON**  
Executive Director

**Health Care Quality and Cost Council**

Minutes

**Date:** Wednesday, November 19, 2008

**Time:** 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

**Place:** One Ashburton Place, 21<sup>st</sup> floor  
Boston, MA 02108

**Council Members Present:** John Auerbach, Charles Baker, Kevin Beagan, JudyAnn Bigby (chair), Jim Conway, Sarah Iselin, Leslie Kirwan, Ken LaBresh, Tom Lee, Shannon Linde, Katharine London, Myrna Malec (representing Beth Capstick), Dolores Mitchell, Quentin Palfrey (representing David Friedman), Greg Sullivan, and Anya Rader Wallack.

**Council Members Participating by Phone:** Joseph Lawler

**I. Approval of Minutes of Council meetings October 22, 2008 and November 14, 2008**

The Council approved the minutes from its October 22<sup>nd</sup> and November 14<sup>th</sup> meetings.

**II. Executive Director's Report** - There was no report from the Executive Director.

**III. Committee Reports**

A. End of Life Care – Jim Conway reviewed the End of Life Care Committee report. See full Committee report posted on [www.mass.gov/healthcare](http://www.mass.gov/healthcare).

B. Chronic Care – The Chronic Care Committee met in collaboration with the End of Life care Committee.

C. Patient Safety – There was no update.

D. Communications and Transparency – There was no update.

**IV. Items for Discussion**

A. Approval of the Council's Reporting Plan specifying the quality and cost measures to be included on the consumer health information website and the security measures used to maintain confidentiality and preserve the integrity of the data.

Secretary Bigby noted her disappointment that an article in the Boston Globe published HCQCC data that has not yet been made public. An important component of transparency is protecting data until it has been proven to be valid with sufficient review and feedback from providers. Secretary Bigby will return to the Council with policy recommendations to prevent such breaches. The Council is not reluctant to display data; rather, the delay of the website is due to the complicated process of collecting claims data and accurately translating this information into measures for use by consumers.

The Council members (with the exception of Charles Baker and Tom Lee who requested not to have access) have seen the data, ratings, and individual hospital performances.

Katharine London noted that hospitals were asked to compare the Council's data with their own data. If hospitals found a ten percent difference from their data to the Council's data, they had to provide documentation verifying the discrepancy. In a few cases (32 of over 1200 measures to be displayed on the website), the hospitals have provided such documentation. Katharine London asked if this data can be suppressed until staff members have sufficient time to review and verify.

Therefore, Secretary Bigby asked for the vote outlined in item A to include suppression of the data recommended by staff. The Council unanimously approved the Reporting Plan with the amendment to suppress recommended data.

#### B. Review of Data to be Displayed on the Council's Website

Katharine London updated Council members on the current status of the website launch. See item A above. There was a brief discussion of the rounding methodology; Katharine London noted the importance of not providing a false level of precision. No hospital was rounded into a higher cost ranking.

#### C. Approval to launch the Council's Health Care Quality and Cost Information Website

The Council unanimously approved the launch of the Council's health care quality and cost information website. The reporting plan needs to be submitted to the legislature, and hospitals need to receive the data as it will be displayed on the website. The launch will occur sometime within the first or second week of December.

Secretary Bigby thanked Katharine London, Gilles Charest, and the other staff members of the Council for their work, flexibility, and support. The other Council members echoed the sentiment.

#### D. Communications Plan for Website Launch.

Secretary Bigby outlined the strategy for public launch of the website. She expected the initial launch to be focused more internally, thereby given legislators, policymakers, and key stakeholders a chance to review the website. After a period of time, there would be a more public external launch to notify consumers, other external organizations, etc. of the website. The Council will work with Solomon McCown to develop the materials for the full launch.

#### E. Budget: Revised FY2009 Spending Plan and Plan for Staff Support

The Council unanimously approved the revised FY2009 spending plan. Commissioner Iselin presented the Health Care Quality and Cost Council Support Plan (see presentation posted on [www.mass.gov/healthcare](http://www.mass.gov/healthcare)). The Council will move ahead with the hiring of the Council Coordinator.

#### F. Approval to contract with Roadmap Director vendor

Anya Rader Wallack presented the review team's recommendation to select Bailit Health Purchasing as the Roadmap Director vendor.

There was a brief discussion of the Roadmap's relationship with DHCFP/RAND's existing efforts to develop a blueprint of cost containment options. The Roadmap will build off of RAND's work as well as other community efforts to understand and contain health care costs. Quentin Palfrey stressed the urgency of beginning this work immediately.

The Council unanimously approved the contract with Bailit.

G. Establishment of Council Cost Containment Committee

Anya Rader Wallack and Sarah Iselin will co-chair the Council's Cost Containment Committee. Anya Rader Wallack noted that the Committee may require a fairly significant time commitment but she welcomes participation and input from everyone. The Committee will be staffed by Bailit, and will report back during full Council meetings. The first order of business is to understand the work of RAND. Council members were asked to contact Anya Rader Wallack or Sarah Iselin if they were interested in joining the Committee.

The Council unanimously approved the establishment of the Council's Cost Containment Committee.

*The next Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 17, 2008, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m., at One Ashburton Place, 21<sup>st</sup> Floor, Boston, MA.*